

Discussion Guide

Use this guide by yourself, with a friend, or in a group to help you pursue a deeper relationship with Jesus this week!

Open

This week we begin a new sermon series called *Messy Life* focusing on how we can maintain our walk with God in the middle of less-than-perfect circumstances. And while it's true that many times we create our own difficulties due to the choices and decisions we make, there are other instances when simply being obedient to God's call on our lives can lead us into tough times. In this study we'll be taking a look at the Old Testament prophet Jeremiah whose courageous trust in God resulted in him being used in unique and powerful ways even though his obedience came at a high personal cost. To get your study started, let everyone tell of a time when they had to tell a difficult truth even though they knew it could possibly get them in trouble...

BIG THOUGHT

When we're obedient and follow God's direction for our lives, even if things get difficult He promises He will take care of us - no matter what happens.

1. Read Jeremiah 26:1 as we begin to take a look at Jeremiah's prophetic role and the people's opposition to his message. How does the Bible describe King Josiah who had just been killed? (see 2 Kings 23:25) Knowing this, how do you think Jeremiah would have felt as God's spokesman during Josiah's reign? How does the Bible describe the new king, Jehoiakim? (see 2 Kings 23:36-37) What effect do you think the regime change would have had on Jeremiah? Explain.
2. Now read v. 2-6. Where did God tell Jeremiah to deliver His message? Why? (v. 2) What was God willing to do if the people responded to Jeremiah's message? (v. 3) What was Jeremiah instructed by God to say? (v. 4-6, and read 1 Samuel 4:1-10 to see what happened to Shiloh) What would you have thought if you were in the crowd at the Temple that day and heard Jeremiah's warning?

3. Now read v. 7-9. After Jeremiah finished, who whipped the mob into a frenzy? (v. 8) And what had offended them? (v. 9) Have you ever received blowback for telling an unpopular truth? Who were the first ones to be offended? Share what happened if you can. Read v. 10-11. Who ends up getting involved in the religious conflict? And what did the priest and prophets want to happen to Jeremiah? (v. 11)
4. Read v. 12-15. On what authority does Jeremiah defend his message? (v. 12) How much does he back down when he's confronted by the governmental officials? (v. 13) How does Jeremiah display respect even while continuing to be faithful to what God told him to say? (v. 14-15) Is that a hard balance for you? Explain.
5. To finish, read v. 16-24. On what grounds did the government officials persuade the people that Jeremiah did not deserve to be punished? (v. 16) What example from Israel's past was raised by some of the elders? (v. 17-19) What happened to another prophet (Uriah) when he tried to warn the same king and people? (v. 23) Who did God send to protect Jeremiah? (v. 24) How can this encourage you when your obedience to God seems to put you in jeopardy?

Take it Further

Talk with God and thank Him that, even though it may not be easy, He will take care of you as you follow Him in obedience!

Daily Verse Readings

Day 1: Psalm 55:22

Day 2: Isaiah 46:4

Day 3: John 16:33

Day 4: Psalm 34:18

Day 5: 1 Peter 5:7

Day 6: Philippians 4:19

Memory Verse: Jeremiah 26:12